

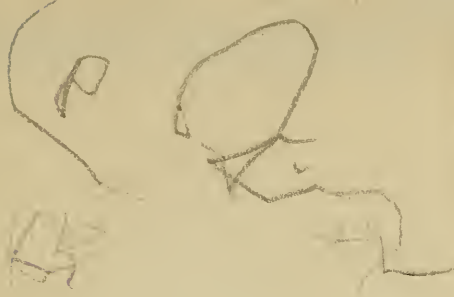
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George W. Lewis Tall

POEMS:

COMPRISING

THE LAST MAN;

THE

ELEMENTS OF THE BEAUTIFUL;

AND

DEATH.

BY ROBERT TYLER.

PHILADELPHIA:

HENRY PERKINS—CHESTNUT STREET.

1839.

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PREFACE.

THE author of the "Last Man" lays no claim to originality in the conception of the subject of his poem. It is as old as the time of the crucifixion, and is to be found, he believes, recorded in scriptural history. It seemed, however, to present to his mind a good material out of which to construct a poem of some interest. How he has succeeded in his undertaking the public will decide. At the same time he begs leave to say, that the age at which the poem was written (the author then being only nineteen), and the naked inexperience of a first effort, may excuse many of its imperfections.

The "Elements of the Beautiful" was written the latter part of last year, and it is in a state of mind vacillating between doubt and hope, that the author, at the solicitation of some of his friends, has determined to make it public. He flatters himself, however, that the poem may not prove entirely unworthy to be read by his countrymen.

TO

ROBERT SAUNDERS, Esq.

PROFESSOR OF MATHEMATICS, ETC. IN WILLIAM AND MARY COLLEGE,
VIRGINIA,

THIS POEM

IS RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED BY

THE AUTHOR.

THE LAST MAN.

Now from the world had nature's freshness faded
Amidst Time's hoariness; for ever was her
Gorgeous glory gone. All-hideous Death,
Insatiate ravager, on his broad wings
Of heavy darkness, lay motionless in air,
Brooding o'er old aged Earth; and all things,
Animate and inanimate, under his
Pestilential breath, the warm juices
Of healthy life did lose, and shrink, and perish.
Alternate sickly pale and darkly eclipsed,
The huge round Sun looked faintly down through
The thick atmosphere. Its watery rays,
Robb'd of beneficent warmth, cold and slimy
As the crawling grave worm, fell dismally
On earth, all vegetation poisoning,

And the buds and seeds of all kinds of fruits
And flowers freezing and blasting with touch
Destructive, icy and envenomed. Its heat
All gone, shorn of its happy brightness, with aspect
Unsteady, and in lurid gloom terrifically
Gleaming, hideously sad, swung in heaven's
Illimitable field the noontide orb,
In olden time so glorious.

With notes

Discordant, as those horrid sounds in groaning
Thunder grating loud and strong, made by hell's
Clanging gates, when Death and Sin, darting,
With restless hands, their scorpion spears, drive
Through these red-hot iron portals, down to raging
Torment's aspic arms, a troop of wretched
Souls, to never-ending torture doom'd,
The planetary spheres, no longer orbital
In their paths of light, now quenched and blotted
Out from heaven's great chart, heady and blind,
Hither and thither err, wand'ring aimless

And compassless through the withering skies. Pale
Terror arm'd, flashing fierce lightnings from his
Baleful eyes, stalks with colossal strides abroad,
And Day, affrighted, sick in horrid agony,
Expires, yielding his rayless throne to pitchy
Night, whose stiller and sadder shadows
In mournful obscurity thickly enshroud
The senile universe. And then unbroken,
Save by some meteor hissing on its streaming
Track, or here and there a star which had not
Lost all form and colour in the general
Darkness, in the unillumined void shining
Portentous with tremulous and flaring
Disk—primeval Chaos reign'd.

Earth herself,
Unbalanced, decaying, and desolate,
The music of her circling motion lost,
Feebly wheel'd on through the limitless space,
Alone and inharmonious. Old age,
Resistless age unchanging, corrupting,

In all its subtlest essence Nature felt,
And her strongest children, sea, tree, and mountain,
Were around her dying fast away.

Victorious had conquering Time become
At last, with strength almighty gifted,
And the scepter'd rule of his avenging
Arm all things acknowledged. Old appear'd
The Sun, through ages on ages shining
Incomputable, myriads on myriads ;
Wrapped in its hazy pall, the sky looked *old*,
And moaning convulsively at life's
Universal wreck, prostrate had wither'd
Nature sunk appall'd and trembling.

Gnarl'd

And barkless in that last day, amid the breathless
Winds, tall and unbending, the stark forest
Trees stood up all leafless and branchless,
And solitary in those vast groves sat
Tongueless Silence on her ebon throne, canopied
By black and stirless clouds, while her hush'd reign

The whole earth noiseless witness'd. Jesu ! how
strange

That not a sound was there, nor stealthy pace
Of crouching cat, or swift tiger glaring wild
With ball of fire savage as his untaught
Heart, when, with growl and spring clutching
Quick and fast his victim, he digs his reeking
Muzzle into its streaming throat ; nor horn-bill'd
Woodpecker's drowsy tap, nor ploughman's
Plaintive whistle wandering from field
To happy cottage home forest embosom'd.
Even Echo, that fairy maid, too beauteous
To be seen by mortal eye, lurking in shady
Covert of aged wood, or in the crystal
Grotto's sparry halls, or seeking the limpid
Wave of mountain streamlet, in some cool
Pebbly cove, shelter'd, by Nature's veil of time-worn
Rocks and waving copse wood green, from common
Sight, wherein to bathe most chastely her faultless
Limbs, even Echo had pined and died, list'ning

In vain the love-toned voice of him, her faithless
Lover, whose call oft flying, yet answering
As oft, much she worshipp'd. No lay of sportive
Bird, no insect's chirping note, was heard
To the bright sunbeam singing. Th' oppressive
Stillness agonised nature's ear of perfect
Melody, and the softest sweep of insect's
Filmy wing (if such there had been) flying
On unmark'd way through air's deep solitudes,
Would, with the trumpet note of a thousand
Stunning thunders, have smote upon the senseless ear.
Extinguish'd were earth's hidden fires :
Stern earthquake's voice of ire was for ever
Hush'd. Cold were the volcanoes' iron-melting
Furnaces, to glow and hiss with heat once
Madly forced by winged Tempests' imprisoned
Breaths. Around them mingled lay masses
Of blackening cinders, and sand, and stones,
And the fused ores of metals corrupt, decaying.
The furrowing marks and scars of age extreme

All things did bear. No tott'ring arch, nor cornice
Mouldering into dust, nor broken pillar
Half buried, lay strewn on the barren ground,
To tell their ancient tale of cities magnificent,
Where once had congregated the busy
Millions of an ant-like race, amid gold
And purple, and luxury's costly show,
And rags, and wretchedness, and poverty's
Squalid rule. The ruby's ruddy ray,
The diamond's star-like light, the mine of untouch'd
Gold, and bright and tempting things that sell men's
Souls, and win their senses into hapless bondage,
Had been exposed to man's keen eye, and trembling,
Gripping hand; and to his crafty search old
Ocean, from his palaces in the unfathom'd depths,
Had yielded forth his treasur'd miracles.
On these, the gorgeous monuments of his fame,
And to his pleasures, gayest ministers,
In finest ingenuity had man wrought
Hard, and in genius' dazzling inspirations

Had schemes devised of noblest immortality.
But on him fell at last the terrible
Curse destructive, and low, annihilated
Into ashes, together sank at once worshippers
And worshipped,—idol, idolaters, temples,
Priests, and all.

Untrodden through all past time,
'The lofty mountains' unscal'd peaks, ever
And anon fell tumbling, as with the crash
Of swiftly wheeling worlds meeting in viewless
Space. 'The foamy torrents, as adown the sides
Of rocky hills, from crag to crag they leap'd,
Had long ceased their brawling courses. In
'The sheltering cliffs of walled precipice,
'The tender and fair leaved flower, like
Innocence in a rough world, no longer
Grew unseen, and bloom'd in aromatic
Airs, and droop'd, and faded, and wither'd.
'The unfragrant lichen, to the unmoist rock,
Grasping at vitality, was no longer known

Desperately to cleave. Together fast
Crumbling were rock and earth away ;
And of the savage world its bristling monsters
Were quick losing place, and form, and terror,
And aspect harsh and wild.

Crestless and surgeless

The untravel'd seas, unruffl'd by tide
Or lifting breeze (the moon now powerless)
Slept dark and stagnant on their unwashed sands ;
In their thick heaviness the inky waters
Diminish'd not, but calmly they rested
Inelastic though yet fathomless. Dried up
Were the broad beds of the rivers' shallower
Depths, while between their banks, now useless,
Rapidly consuming, were bones of fishes
Innumerable, thickly commingled with
Skeleton remains of men and beasts, all
Loathesome.

Of all existence various

And wondrous that was in the new world's

Morning, by great Wisdom's self bidden
Into harmonious beauty, of life that could
Die, not now remain'd the smallest, feeblest
Spark. Untenanted was air's buoyant
Domains : ocean's countless throngs were gone ;
All kinds of beasts which knew the firmer
Land, and the millions exhaustless of the insect
Race, sporting in flood of happiest sunshine,
Or searching 'mid sweet spring's fragrant flowers
For enamell'd honied drops, or sip of dew
Morn's earliest rose embalming, empearl'd
In purest font, delicious draught ! down
To the eternal grave, in his uncounted
Generations, man had long since gone. His
Governments vainly aspir'd to bear
Immortal impress. Empires mighty, and great
Kingdoms, wiser republics, in pride had
All been born, in strength robust had grown,
And then had sunk into Death's wide arms,
To be forgotten, as Time his voiceful

Record threw into eternity's profound
Abysm.

All were dead that could die. And yet
One heart did beat on earth. The wand'ring Jew,
Deep-hated Ahasuerus, owned its feeble pulse.
Unwilling witness of life's unhappy end,
Stern matter's slow decay, and over Time
Eternity's dread triumph, THE LAST MAN
Stood on earth alone. But mercy (so full
Is God of mercy) was even to *him* extended ;
And the moment now was near at hand, when
An act of blackest sin, deep dyed in crime,
Horrid and unspeakable, was from Heaven's
Register, in godlike charity, to be
Blotted out.

On a time gray rock gigantic,
Towering, stood the most terribly accurs'd,
And with immortal sight his eye expanding,
O'er tideless ocean wander'd, and old aged
Land, now bald and tenantless, and through

The deep space of the unnatural skies
Cold, desolate, and dreary. On the tott'ring
Mount tremblingly he stood, and for the last
Time, *for the last time*, long and earnestly
Abroad he gazed in anguish. But, sudden,
Tense and strong the muscles of his palsied
Limbs became, and his low and muttering
Voice, firm and sonorous as in manhood's
Prime, and in his eyes was gather'd gradually
A fire lustrous though steady, and confidingly
He raised his suffering brow in willing trust.
Insensibly from beneath his feet the soil
No longer slid. The mould'ring rocks, nodding
And ghastly, no longer shrank around him
With lack of strength : and nature ceased her wail,
When his clear voice, deep and thrilling,
The unbending justice of eternal God
Proclaiming, of light and love and truth
The Almighty Father, loud from amidst
The silence of earth's grave peal'd forth

By the winds and stars to be attested,
And the sun himself, and the farthestmost
Distant heavens.

Dread God ! who sitteth
In infinity amid the lights of suns,
Revolving in their golden spheres in brightness
Everlasting ; of the universal worlds
Architect almighty, and in exhaustless
Splendours high enthroned above the starry
Hosts, in glory inexpressible and eternal ;
Whose beginning unconceived eternity
Will never know ; whose end futurity
May never witness ; Lord of the boundless
Skies, Ruler of light and darkness, whose
Power of perfect love through all the wide
Outspread dominions of the infinite
Void extends empire without end, and whose
Slightest will can into atoms strew
The heavens sublime and all that in them is ;
Hear me, O Father Omnipotent, *me the accursed,*

Who now in humblest penitence lowly
Doth bend before thy throne, thy throne of glory.
God of my fathers, I pray for mercy ;
Thou knowest through thousands of torturing
Ages I have suffered pain, pain constant,
Unalleviated in its scorching fire.
On my haggard brow is stamp'd care's furrow'd
Impress ; over my wasting form, wave
Following wave in wrath uncheck'd, time's
Hissing surges merciless have dashed.
All in vain my hands were clasp'd imploring,
All in vain in the soul's big agony
My rugged knees were bent to thee appealing,
All in vain my voice was raised to thee
In passion's fervid accent : Among my race
A Parian outcast, denied of thee, O God
Of Israel ! oft amid the lightning's scathing
Bolts, when time was young, and earth
Was green, have I protectless been driven
Forth, while in lurid gloom the storm has

Fiercely frown'd, and down to the pitiless
Dust I have been stricken like a pithless
Weed. Alone, oft lying on the jagged edge
Of horrid precipice, in its rude might
I have felt the rock-ribb'd mountain tremble
At the earthquake-demon's pealing shout,
His charging cry of battle—and as onward
Like chafed ocean's sweeping, roaring tide,
The million-winged monarch of the tempest
Came with front of hideous gloom, and eye
Whose flash was lightning, before his course
Direful, resistless, I have sunk powerless.
Earth's dark bosom has received me, man's grave,
But not *my* grave, and in this living tomb
With loathsome bones, and crumbling stones heap'd up
Together, over and around me, for years uncounted
Have I laid alive praying to die, until
The voice imperative of mighty fate,
'Thy sleepless agent, would be loudly heard,
Calling me from out my charnel prison

House, to pass through other scenes of unchanged
Misery. On ocean's restless breast have
I been toss'd, and with his slimy monsters,
Into his fathomless depths, have gone darkly
Down, and while kingdoms were building up
And falling into ruins, have been whirl'd
In his voiceless eddies. All things have I
Outlived. Fear from danger shrinking
I know not now, and pain assails with barbed
Shaft my callous limbs no longer. Man
Has been forgotten long, and all the happy ties
Which bound me to my kind. The strength
Of solid earth has pass'd away, and a pall
Of gloom funereal the once bright heaven
Involves. Memory on its bitter aliment
Hath fed until its light is out, except
That which consumingly, like to a furnace
Fire, it sheds upon *one* hurried act, *one* deed
Of shame and sin. Hope only now remains,
Hope in thy mercy infinitely great and good.

The LAST MAN bows submissive to thy will,
O Father, and sheds the tear of penitence,
And calls aloud on thee for mercy. Glory
To *thee*, most high God, and to *thee*, merciful
Saviour and Redeemer, who with radiant
Hosts of cherubim, and seraphim which sing
Continual praises, doth sit on thrones
Of purest light above—amen—amen.
As thus the fated spoke, in fear, in faith,
In heartfelt penitence he bow'd his head
Submissive, and at his feet the tear upon
The bare and thirsty ground did fall,
And softer and clearer than can be conceived
In human thought, a voice did flow like
Muttering music in his ear, and the whole
Universe heard the words and trembled :
“Thou art pardon'd.”
Through the wide heavens the word of grace
Went forth, and earth, her appointed hour
Being come, dissolved away in darkness.

ADDRESS

TO THE

ELEMENTS OF THE BEAUTIFUL.

—

EARTH, sea, and sky : earth, warm and beautiful
 As the broad sun sets in massy splendour,
 Hill tops and forest lustrous with borrow'd gold,
 All heaven flooded with his glorious beams ;
 Sea, whose broad expanse, light heaving beneath
 The effulgent sunset, in its em'rald depths
 Might woo the spirit of the feathery cloud
 'To view her smiling form, to whose wild music,
 Faint and low, and sweet as tone of lyre, struck out
 By beauty's hand, Zephyr doth gently sport,
 Whose softly swelling wave might rock a baby-child
 'To sleep.—Sky, into whose azure void so deep,

'The eye doth strain, searching for Heaven's palaces,
Cloudless, save in those of shape fantastic,
And of gorgeous dyes, which day's proud monarch,
Royal to the last, hath call'd around him,
His pompous exit from the world to witness—
Earth, warm and gay, and beautifully bright
In summer's richest garniture array'd,
Broad beaming sun, fair flowers, soft green turf,
And tall trees bending with their leafy burdens ;
Sea, by thine own melodious murmurings,
Soothed to rest ;—sky, lovely as eye of seraphim,
The unfading elements ye are of *bright*
And *beautiful*. From boyhood's playful hour
My passionate worship ye have always been,
For in your fine existences I have
Ever felt that mystic spirit, which, with
The rare essence of the soul commingling,
Lights up a dazzling flame immortal, never
To be quench'd till fame shall die, and glory
Be no more. In your thousand forms enchanting,

Ye have I often seen; and wrapp'd in lofty
Contemplation, with fervid thought my daring
Soul has burn'd, and highest aspiration,
Deep to drink of wisdom's living waters,
That I might to the world some hidden secret
Teach, magnificent and wondrous, or act
Some mighty deed of *good*, a legacy
To man, a record on glory's stateliest
Arch, a monument to stand unmoulder'd
By oblivion's rustying touch.

Or else,

Sinking with dreamy consciousness of bliss,
Prone on the verdant turf, all sprinkled o'er
With loveliest, rarest flowers, white, purely
White as the smooth brow of shrinking innocence,
Or purple as the rich dye that paints morn's
Earliest cloud, or bright amber-tinted
As the gleamy ray shot forth by evening's
Golden sun on plat of greensward glowing;
And while thus reclining on my pillowing

Arm, I listen to the quivering leaves
With joyous whispers, and in tuneful time
Dancing above my head to fairy notes
Of music-ennamour'd south wind, inhaling
Choicest fragrance, I have gently mused.
On things past have I gently mused—on things
To come, while the fair present, like an isle
Enchanted, in magic colours brightly
Seen, around me lay in slumbrous beauty.
On mem'ry have I softly call'd, on mem'ry,
With her starry train attendant, pleasures
And joys subtle and of mystic birth like
Dream heard melodies, innocent triumph,
And delight high and exultant. Through
The light shadows of the unforgotten
Past, with these, her chosen handmaids, I have
Bid her come, my untutor'd heart upfilling
With a rare, sweet gladness. Bright images
She has shown me, fair thoughts, though sometimes
tinged

With melancholy, I have from her won,
By soothing arts, and her voice, O haply,
Yet lingers on my ear, musical as
The pebbly rill, that plaintive sings unto
The sleeping flowers on summer's holy eve.

Hope, too, ethereal hope, half earthly,
Half divine ; fair herald of the future,
Array'd in garments multicolour'd, yet
All beautiful, unbidden, though thrice welcome
Thou hast, in such blissful moments, to me
Been as a fond mother. Oft the thick
Obscuring curtain from the future world
Thou hast unveil'd, and tempering to my
Shrinking gaze, a mortal, the view resplendent,
Things have I beheld of wondrous brightness,
Strange, O strange, and yet exceeding glorious !
On jasper columns, high tow'ring amid
The peaceful skies, peaceful and clear, but still
Of varied hues celestial, on which
The eternal sun shone with intensest

Splendour, compelling old Time himself his
Baleful eyes to veil, in deathless characters,
Name on name appear'd of those Fame's mighty
Sons, who in irradiate glory died,
To be as gods in after life. Their blazing
Summits countless glories crown'd, glories which
Thus attend the sculptur'd records of the great
Immortal. In grandeur proud beyond these
Pillar'd monuments, whose roof might scarce be
Spann'd by rainbow's loftiest arch, glittering
In precious stones inestimable, stood
That temple, consecrate by fame from nature's
Noblest birth, to immortality, of frame
Symmetrical, and of finest art,
To equal which no mortal hand can without
Death aspire, yet of bulk more huge than that
Fam'd city of the sun in flinty Araby,
Under whose heavy burden earth overstrain'd
Did groan, or monstrous Tyre sea-belted,
Or thick wall'd Babylon. On the broad

Enfolding doors I saw, in letters, whose
Lines were silvery stars, *home of the illustrious*
Written. High thrones of amethyst along
The porphyre walls were ranged, and on these were
Statues placed, in semblance exact of life
Of those, the blessed, who for *good* and *right*
Had warr'd, with open sword, or wisdom's speech
Persuasive, or iron *will*, unbent to tyrant's
Frown or wrench of galling chain. Each wore
A jewell'd crown, each splendid, but dissim'lar
In shape and colour, which sat most loftily
On their stately brows ; some of diamond,
Diamond throughout, unflaw'd, unstain'd,
And priceless, to which all heaps of earthly
Gold would be as valueless as dust by
Thrifless minds squander'd abroad ; others
Of glowing carbuncle, or ruby stain'd,
Out gleaming the warrior planet of the skies ;
Others opal, or amber-ray'd, like cloudless
Liquid, mellow'd light from autumn's westring

Sun; others of snowy pearl, and others
Still of deep green emerald, fashioned
In shape of oak, or laurel wreath. In their
Ensculptured hands emblems of dignity
They held; the impartial sword of justice, truth's
Lustrous shield, on whose keen dazzling surface
Falsehood look'd to die, the rod of lawless power
Snatch'd from the despot's grasp and broken, broad
Charter of man's rights, won from prerogative
By purchase, harp in whose magic strings lurk'd
Poesy and music, and rare book well fill'd
With the rich problems of a calm philosophy.
Beneath their feet, scatter'd around, lay fragments
Of stain'd and mould'ring fetters, and batter'd
Crowns, and batons of hereditary
Office, stripp'd of their gold and glitter,
Lack-lustre gems, which once had graced the crowns
Of haughty tyrants, edicts for blood or
Treasure thirsting, now torn and miserably
Soil'd, and all the profane mummeries which

Kings and thrones put on. Entranced I lie
And gaze, until, methinks, quick starting
To my feet, with flushed cheek and deeply
Swelling soul, a wild outburst of heaven-toned
Minstrelsy, loud volumed as the thunder's
Roar, yet, to my unstrained ear, soft as
Tremulous sigh of love-lorn lute, gives hail
To me, a lowly son of song, as one
Whom fame in after times should welcome
To these sunlit halls, as one to die
In glory's arms, even as they had died.
On the green and fragrant grass outstretched,
Calm sky above, and nature dressed in smiles
Around me—such visions have I seen.

TO

THE HON. WADDIE THOMPSON,

OF SOUTH CAROLINA,

AND

THE HON. JOHN P. KENNEDY,

OF MARYLAND,

THIS POEM

IS RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED BY

THE AUTHOR.

PREFACE.

THE following poem may be regarded as written partly in a style innovating on the established blank verse measure. For this, if for no other reason, it may be considered a fit subject for critical chastisement. With proper respect for the opinions of others, however, I think otherwise. It will be remembered that all styles of verse are founded on rules of poetic propriety, entirely *conventional*. These conventional laws are adopted because of a supposed suitability to the end proposed to be attained. This end, so far as the prosody of verse is concerned, directs itself strictly to the ear, to win this sense to pleasure or admiration by the wooing harmony of sounds. In this respect mark the regular progress and return of the lyrical measure, the Spenserian stanza, and the ten-syllabled lines of blank verse. But it cannot be maintained, with intellectual propriety, or even without absurdity, that there may not be

improvement in the prosodiacal construction of verse as properly as in prose writing, and those thousand other subjects of human invention, which are gradually undergoing the improvement of an enlightened reformation, as the mental power of man acquires deeper energies and greater strength of capacity. I do not intend laying myself open to the charge of egotism in expressing this opinion. I merely intend uttering a sentiment of general import—maintaining, simply, that the question is yet open, and that the sole circumstance of this poem being composed in a style which may be regarded as an innovation on any pre-established measure, is not, because of *that* alone, subject to be placed under the ban of a contemptuous criticism. If it does not, *in itself*, offend against the ear or the mind, against the innate fastidious delicacy of the one, or the elaborated rules of the other, any other objection of necessity must be puerile.

To come to my reasons for having chosen this particular character of versification. To remark nothing on the authority, to a certain extent, at least, given for it in the weighty example of several of the first poets who have graced the world of English literature, or who have existed during any age on earth, and independently of the corroborative testimony of Mr. Shelly, particularly as to its perfect

consonance with good taste, it appears to me there are reasons intrinsic to the case decisive of the issue. The great excellences of a good poem, written in sequent uninterrupted blank verse, are the scope and majesty of idea admissible, the power of a proper and chaste *inflexion*, which is not only allowable but even desirable, and the strong harmonious and unintermittent flow of the musical current. But, if this particular order of verse has these advantages, it likewise has its correspondent array of objections. The *inelasticity* of its construction, which inflexion itself does not properly remedy, the monotony of its sound, the turgid and tiresome appearance of page after page of this unaltering and unbreathing verse, fatiguing to the very eye itself, must be regarded as faults, from which it will be highly desirable, if possible, to relieve any poem. The style of the following composition is offered as an attempt to remedy some of these objections. Whether it answers its intention, whether it may not be subject to less excusable objections than ordinary blank verse, is yet for the public to decide. I will be excused for thinking favourably of this remedial attempt, and can but hope for favour from the world of letters.

It will be observed that the poem, as regards substance or idea, is of the ideal, or of that school of poetry the least popular. There is no appeal, or but little, to *passion*,

which, at this day, makes poetry so fashionable and popular. It has been my desire to obtain images solely intellectual, divested, as much as possible, of every extraneous impression; and to present these images, for the most part, in a musical, breathing, and elastic verse, except in cases in which the *idea* of the verse requires otherwise; for it is very evident it would be improper to use the same *kind* of language in the description of thunder as of a summer breeze or delicate spring flower. Much of the poem, indeed, is written in regular blank verse; but I have endeavoured as much as possible, in the use of other poetic measures, to relieve it from monotony and the other above mentioned objections.

It may be urged that I am only an imitator of Mr. Shelley. This charge, if made, I repel, since I disdain to be a mere imitator of any one; but at the same time I am proud to acknowledge that I have made Mr. Shelley's poetry a subject of severe study. In my estimation there is no English poet his superior, and but very few his equal.

With these hasty explanations, I now present this poem (in part) to the public. Part the second will be forthcoming in due time.

DEATH.

WHAT art thou, and *whence*, O mighty Death! whose
Ghastly shadow palls the universe? Unseen
Thy form by man, yet in its infinite strength
Immortal, darkly, terribly unchanging.
Unfelt thy heavy hand, yet crushing in their
Spheres of splendour rolling worlds. Unheard
Thy voice, uncompass'd in its knelling tone,
Yet ever speaking dread command resistless:
Who, as a huge undying serpent, gnawest
At nature's strong-pulsed heart, until upon
Her shrieks and pain thou gluttest thy rancorous
Fill;—*whence* comest thou, array'd in horrors
Undefined, and sablest terrors, inhuman
And all hideous one?

Thou, whose word, grating
In harshest sound, bids harmony into
Discord, and canst make the music of the stars
As groaning thunder; who canst smite the fires
Of the sun, and turn this blazing fount of light
To vasty fields of foul and stagnant darkness;
Avenging minister of God's great curse
On man, shadow of universe, nature's
Promethean vulture, life's veil'd antithesis—
What art thou, dread and horrid one?

On ocean's
Surging gulf I lay—night sat above me
On her leaden throne, her form dark veil'd
In ebon clouds and gloom, and hidden from
The paly-gleaming stars. On me these thoughts
Then fell, and when I spake, a voice came down
From out the blacken'd skies, and answer'd
To my words.

“Mortal of fearless soul, whose
Eye undaunted seeks to roam beyond earth's

Common barrier, and to know the wondrous
Mysteries of Death, shake off the chain that
Binds thy spirit's wings; up, fly, and come with me,
And surely shalt thou see all that thy heart
Beats fast and loud to know."

With a quick
Impulse my soul leapt from its bonds. Mortality's
Cold grasp no longer felt, from the billowy
Bosom of the rolling sea I sprang, an essence
Strong and joyful in its disembodied bliss;
By that voice which spake to me, I stood,
(A spirit in air ethereal, poised
On starry wings,) all time, and space, and power,
Of length, and depth, and breadth, all knowledge
Of the present, past, and future, to my mind
Reveal'd.

In trembling ecstasy I look'd
Throughout the universe deep, unmeasured,
Limitless. My eager gaze shrank back
Upon itself, when first its dazzling wonders

Burst in terror, glory, grandeur, on my sight.
Above, below, around, far, *far* away,
Through space that knew nor breadth, nor end, space
Infinite as heaven itself, were systems
On systems celestial, ranged myriad
Times on myriads, multiplied in light,
And strength, and order, more various than
In uncounted numbers are the untold
Sands of ocean's heap'd up beds, and perfect
In their kinds as various.

Biformed stars

There were, hugely magnificent, crescent,
Triformed, and round, of lens-like shapes, convex
Or concave, and solids half spherical,
Glittering with bright-illumined glories—
All forms and fashions that the wide expanded
Eye might bear, shining in silvery light,
Or gleaming with parti-coloured beams, gold
Or purple, amethyst, jasper, or pearl—
Like those which one who travels far to seek

From nature, in her desert ways, those lessons
That the mighty mother there, in rugged form,
May teach, oftentime, admiring much,
In cloudless night has seen, the splendid terrors
Of that scene sublime, denying sleep, while
With unpillow'd head he lies beneath
Arabian skies, or, yet more hapless far,
Outstretch'd on broad Zahara's burning fields.

Moons unnumber'd, robed in beauty maiden-like
And soft, while gracefully, with timid wills
Obedient, they sail attentive to the proud
Majestic motions of the planetary spheres,
Belted, or barr'd, or plane.

Suns, or blood red,
Or with black fire smouldering, these God's dread
Volcanic arsenals ; or rainbow, hued,
Soft temper'd to the enraptur'd sight, with many
An iris ray and delicate shade ;
Or else broad worlds of golden flame, full blazing
In such quenchless splendours, that old Chaos

And satanic strife, in torturing pain's
Fierce torments, down to their desolate seats
Of treble gloom and ever-shrieking winds,
With groans and yells terrific, flee, but to behold
In momentary glimpse.

And much more terrible,
And still more bright than these, vast glowing comets
On their loud hissing ways forth belching
Sulphurous pestilence from Etnæan
Depths, white with glaring heats, than hottest hell
More hot, and speeding swifter than the lurid
Lightning's fork through the wide azure fields
Of space illimitable.

Yet all these,
Whether of sound proportion to the measuring eye,
Or of a horrid make, whether of import
Foul or fair they seem'd, were ministers
Of God's strength and glory, perfect in their sort,
And bent on offices of just and good.

I turn'd my eye on earth. Beneath my feet,

Slow wheeling, with the soft seraphic music
Of the starry choir, it circled on its bright
Harmonious way enfolded, in that rich
And varied drapery which benignant God,
With ever graceful and full bounteous hand,
Around its lovely form has freely thrown.
Long wavy chains of swelling hills uprising
Gently from the sloping vales beneath,
As if to woo the rustling noontide breezes,
First I saw, and mountains, cold and granite-mass'd,
So huge, and still, and stern. But even here
Might oft be seen sweet Beauty's softening smile,
Unfurrowing from their stormy brows
The gather'd frowns of ages, when their grisly
Heads the silken mists of sportive morn
Enwreath'd, or when tiara'd with those clouds
Of golden hue, which from her vermeil altars
Of the west, serenest eve sends up
In volumed incense to the smiling skies.
Next wide expansive seas, across whose broad

And ever-heaving tides the playful breezes
Move on tireless wings, to distant lands less
Bless'd wafting afar their fragrant loads,
Pilfer'd in nectar'd kisses from the incautious
Flowers, while dreaming, in star-lit sleep,
Their rosy lives away, they lay in some
Embower'd paradise of East. Then saw I,
All at once, array'd beneath my wond'ring
Gaze, in one far sweeping view, the moss turf'd
Covering of the quivering sod, trembling
Into glowing life under the warm sun's
Vivifying rays, while delighted nature
Shows unto the vernal day the million birth
Of young spring's meek-eyed brood ; the velvet
Foliage of the waving woods ; the desert's
Thirsty sands, gemm'd with their green and cool
Oases, doubly beautiful ; rivers, whose
Pearly streams stretch'd far away through fertile
Plains to ocean's emerald brink ; and lakes,
That seem'd in their transparent depths the crystal

Eyes of earth. Mountains, hills, and winding dales,
Rivers, and seas, and lakes, and purling streams,
Gay blooming boughs, and flowery turf, conspired,
In all their loveliest power, to make
The fresh, the rich, and radiant beauty
Of this orb'd world.

Like her the hapless
Peri, who, through the adamantine gate
Of Paradise half-oped to let some happy
Spirit in, caught once a glimpse of Eden's
Blooming bowers, and wept to enter there,
My soul, enwrap't in the unveil'd brightness
Of this beatific scene, forgetting all
Save that I heard and saw, thrill'd with a sense
Of loveliness and light, I leant upon
The bosom of the air in blissful admiration.

The spirit clasp'd my hand, and at that touch
I felt celestial blisses quiver through my form.
Swift gliding through the moonlit atmosphere

Full spiced with odorous perfumes,
Which the fairy genii, who preside
O'er evening's balmy hours, with lily
Fingers pressing from the uncrush'd flowers,
Had scattered far and wide, exhaustlessly,
Now fill'd with airy shapes, attuning their
Soft voices in liquid streams of joy, while

Night, well pleased,

Looks down with all her starry eyes,
And lists in silence to that cadence wild ;

And jocund with the merry laugh

Of many a gamboling sprite,

When presently the sighing summer breeze
Comes puffing on, and in its eddy path
They vainly strive to fly, with golden ringlets
Fluttering in the sweet ambrosial blast ;

'Through the soft star-silver'd airs,
'Thick populated with all lovely shapes,

We passed on rapid wings,
And lit at last upon the solid land.

It was a lovely sight to see
'That spot on which we stood.

Behold an oval fashion'd dale,
 Deep-bosom'd in the midst
 Of gently rising hills,
 Whose emerald waves,
Through all the wide extended landscape rolling,
 With a rich woodland screen
 O'ertops the fair horizon.
No mortal foot hath ever pass'd
 Its myrtle-guarded walls,
No mortal eye hath e'er beheld
 The exhaustless treasures
 Of its many-tinted flowers.
Such as the enthusiast's dream alone can see,
 When morning's light and formful sleep
 Holds up to varying fancy's
 Ever changing gaze
'That image-making mirror which reflects herself,

Or such as may array itself
Before a poet's eager vision, youth-inspired,
When imagination's golden light streams
O'er the hues of his prismatic mind,
And wakes the tuneful echoes of his heart,
While sitting on the pebbly beach
Of some sun glowing sea,
Or gazing, on the white-wing'd clouds,
The palaces of spirits in the sky,
From some cool-shaded noiseless vale,
He pictures to himself
Enwrap't in magic-colour'd thought's fresh wove tissue,
Some spring-clad island home,
Far distant on that burnished tide,
Or paints some happy dwelling place in heaven,
Where peace, and love, and joy, for ever smile—
Such to my full enchanted sight
Was this embower'd haunt.
The turf lay thick and green,
Close-matted in its mossy woof

Upon the genial soil,
Save where sweet beds of flowers
Gaze upward on the stars,
Whose rich commingling odours,
From where they lie,
With gentle arms
In love enwreath'd about each other's forms,
Intoxicate the soul with a delight
More blissful than they feel in their own fragrance.
The red rose, blushing in its virgin pride,
Hangs lightly on its briary stalk,
And from its pale-cheek'd sister's brow
Kisses, with trembling lip,
The pearly tear away.
Here violets, that spring by night,
Of rarer shapes and scents by far
Than those steep'd in their sweetest dew,
Which some blithesome village maiden,
Bright as the trilling lark, at early dawn,
Gay-singing to her pleasant task,

Plucks lightly, from amidst their flagged leaves,

E'er yet the burning sun

Hath touch'd, with fervid ray,

Their cool retreat—

And soft as the breath they breathe—

Mingle their hues and balmiest odours

With the nectar'd sighs

Of wind-flowers, pansies, hyacinths, oxlips,

And sun-striped tulips tall,

Until the freighted airs themselves grow faint,

And on their weary way sink down to sleep

Amid the silent flowers watching there.

Nodding o'er such as these,

And thousands yet more wonderful

Of this fair sisterhood,

With forms of wild untutor'd beauty,

And with colours magically bright,

Were uncounted oderiferous shrubs,

The rich aroma of whose scented leaves,

The purest otto from gay India's clime

Distill'd from dew-fed roses,
Might, in the strength of its keen sweetness, envy ;
And fruit trees, burden'd with their luscious gold,
That cluster'd thick upon each loaded branch,

Bent low and temptingly,
As though to beg some kindly hand
To pluck their juicy mellowness.

Over all these,
In mazy intertwistings, ran
All tendril'd vines of summer birth,
Some showering down, for aye,
Their million-coloured bloom
Upon the verdant earth,
Which melting there, beneath spring's gentle warmth,
Flow'd purling through the grass
In many-hued perfum'd streams,
Low murmuring odorous melodies ;
For aye supplied by countless swelling buds,
Whose perfect beauties, bursting on the light,
Expand in size and loveliness,

Until at last,
Ecstatic in full bosom'd joy,
'They leap away from off the parent stem,
'To be resolv'd into nectareous springs.
Others, their flexile limbs all intertwin'd,
Bore crystal gems,
Embosom'd in a glossy garniture
Of trailing vine and leaf,
Or large purpl'd transparencies
Enshaded with the deep dyed 'Tyrian stain,
Or jewels bright gleaming with rich rubied rays,
'That leave their liquid treasures on the taste,
E'er yet the tongue hath press'd them.
Through this enchanting paradise
Our pausing steps,
Along a labyrinthine walk, slow wandering,
Led to the green unebbing brink
Of an unruffl'd lake,
On whose unrippling stainless tide
The water lily lay,

Sipping, in graceful ease, the limpid pearl,

While gazing down, in maiden pride,

Upon her snowy form,

Light pictur'd in its waveless depths,

In pure excess of happy innocence,

Elve-like and soft she smiles.

Here, when the sunbeam's virgin gold at morn,

Comes broadly streaming, from th' empurpled east,

In lustrous glow,

Each sparkling drop

Leaping beneath the roseate thrill,

This dimpled sea seems as the flashing fount

Of all earth's molten gems ;

But now beneath the quiet-shining stars

And fleecy-silver'd moon,

And the unearthly measures of that fairy song,

Whose soothing raptures, now, in gentlest current,

Steal from yonder jasmine trellised bower ;

It calmly lies,

Bright as the seeming moveless stars

That on its surface glitter.
Oh! list the soul-enthraling music
Of that fairy strain.

I.

Come hither, fairies, to my jasmine bower,
And wake in joy the charmed lay ;
Haste hither, sisters, ere this moonlit hour
Shall fly on silken wings away :
Bring the myrtle and rose,
And that flower which grows
Lily white in the deep forest shade,
And we'll twine then a chain,
That the spell may be vain
Which would cruelly harm the fairy maid.

II.

Sweet sisters, come from your sports in the air,
Where ye follow the fire-fly's sparkling shoots,
Place the dew-pearl again in your glittering hair,
And sing bright strains with your golden lutes,

That their magic sound
May steal sweetly around,
As they spread their web of fairy light
O'er the sleeping flowers,
And the nectar'd showers
That fall from the eyes of gentle night.

III.

From your palaces under the rosy wave,
Where in dreams ye pass the sunny day,
From your gem-wrought homes in the crystal cave,
Or leafy couch, pearl'd by gay streamlet's spray,
Or waking or sleeping,
In earth or air keeping
Your dreams or your vigils of love ;
Bless'd spirits, one and all,
O list to the fairy's call :
For the stars in the silent sky,
And the low wind's whispered sigh,
And the tear in each flow'ret's eye,
Will now our sweet toned power approve.

My panting soul
In blissful madness heaved and fell,
Beneath the melting charm
Of that dissolving minstrelsy.
The bulbul, nursed in Asia's orange gardens
With tongue full steep'd in liquid odours,
From where he sits, upon his rose leaf nest,
Singing to night's fair silver crescent queen,
Hath never yet pour'd forth such plaintive call;
Nor mock bird, when the soft summer lightning
Of his thrilling note,
Flashing across the vermeil-tinted wave,
For the listless drowsy ear
Of golden hues, dreaming eve
Awakes sweet echoes o'er the honied waters
Of some stilly sea;
Nor lute, nor harp, nor witch'd Thessalian lyre,
Nor woman's charmed breath,
Nor reed, touch'd by the balmy west-wind's lip,
Nor deep unbroken strain

Of slow harmonious melody
Breath'd from the solemn organ's windy tubes,
Floating with wave-like rise and fall
Through some broad arch'd cathedral dome,
Or, singly arous'd in song,
Or all in fullest unison awoke,
Until the fainting heart grows sick
With unaccustom'd bliss,
One half the rapture of that magic lay
Hath ever known or felt.

The song has ceased—the last vibrating sound,
Caught by the murmuring airs, prolong'd,
At last had sunk in silence, save what might
Linger on pleas'd memory's ear, when thus again
The Spirit spake.

“ This scene, so rarely
Beautiful, has fill'd thy fine existence
With delight new-born, unspeakable ;
While joy's immortal glow

Pervades thy keenly sensate being,
A power, of perfect knowledge,
Throughout thy mind extends ;
And full incorporate with thy feeling self
Uranian love holds sovereign sway.
The dewy softness of this moonlit hour,
The unclouded glory of yon wheeling orbs,
Each blade of fragrant grass, leaf, vine, and tree,
This limpid lake, that seems a fount of light,
That fairy music strain, so wildly sweet,
Seem all of heaven, fraternal soul, to thee.
Behold that flower upspringing from thy
Unfelt step: fresh seems it as a laughing child,
Awoke from healthy slumber, smiling
In its mother's arms. The half felt breeze
Slight bends its pliant stalk,
And as its tiny bud rocks to and fro
In innocent glee,
Sparkling with an inborn light of gladness,
It looks a purple star of earth.

Gaze deep, with unimpeded eye,
Into its hidden source of life,
Hidden by God's great will from mortal sight,
And mark the powers that in its nature rule;
Seest thou, soul, ought there like death?"

Into its complex-textur'd form
My wondering eye deep search'd;
Full and perfect was God's power,
Seen in that little painted flower,
As in the hugest sun,
That, veil'd in golden glory,
Rolls its measureless sphere
In nature's wide, unbounded, universal dome.
Perpetual power of life was there:
In it I saw the seed from whence it sprang;
The tender star-shaped leaf,
The stalk of vivid green,
The pearly roots, entwisted in the ground,
Was but *new* form.

The vein-like channels playing through its trunk,
Under the quick invisible pulsings

Of its unseen heart,

Gave through its frame a perfect conduct
To the elixir streams of life and odour ;

And yet all these

Were in that seed from which it had its birth :

All these were there :

Yet by immortal spirits only to be seen ;

And in this unattractive form,

Again to be condensed

By nature's fadeless laws,

So that God's rule may be obeyed

That gives it being,

Undying as that earth on which it falls.

Spirit, I said, while o'er my radiant face

I felt the many-changing shadows

Of my thoughts quick pass,

I seek in vain, Death is not here.

Behold again, and thrice
The Spirit waved his hand.

The scene was bitter changed—
Seemed it that months had now roll'd by,
And on their billowy tides,
Into a wreck, most sadly desolate,
Had swept away, forever, peace and smiling beauty
From that sunny place, whilome so bright and glad.

The whistling winds blew keen and cold
Across chill fields of garish snow,
Unprinted and unpress'd, while now and then,
With fitful melancholy howl,
They uttered torture's shrill complaints,
As though their famished spirits needed yet
More prey on which to feed—
More havoc to be done.

The ice encrusted branches
Of the leafless trees
Groaned piteously aloud, or shriek'd,

When thus the curdling blast pass'd on,
As if fierce animate with pain.
Rank weeds, with dank and pithless forms,
Drooping in cold uncover'd penury,
Now threw their skeleton shadows
O'er that comfortless plain,
As though fiend-like to mock, with misery and wo,
The ashes of dead flowers entomb'd beneath;
Not one small spot of velvet verdure
Met the dazzled eye;
But here and there a frosted tuft of grass,
With aspect stain'd and scorch'd, was seen,
From which the sicken'd eye fled fast in fright,
E'er scarce was recognised
Its foul and wither'd presence.
The vines their leaves had lost, and circling tendrils,
Whose sly insinuating fingers once
Had search'd, amid the whispering trees,
For tasteful places,
Where best rich fruit might cluster gracefully,

Now stiff and straight, in rigid lines,
Or ornamentless curves,
Hung awkward on each creaking limb,
Swinging monotonous with the piping storm ;
Or on the hard and flinty ice-bound soil,
All sapless lay,
Dead to all grace, and lost to fragrance.
On the brilliant lake the glittering ice,
Thick frozen, shone, and through the torpid tide
Beneath, the water lily's stem no longer
Waving ran. Bright spirits all were gone
From earth, air, sea,
Of this once fragrant dale,—
Ouphs, fairies, elves, and sylphs,
To seek for happier homes
In some far distant sun-warm land ;
And herbless, leafless, shuddering aghast
With cramp and cold, here might Despair well reign
With demons leagued from winter's twilight caves.

Lo ! this is Death,—
And shivering, then, with dread and fear abhorrent,
Shrinking and pale, I closed my eyes in pain ;
Spirit, I sadly said, is *this* the end
For which this elvish bower
Dawn'd into beauty's light ?
Was *this* the all for which gay flowers bloom'd,
And leafy vines ran wild
In nature's untrain'd grace,
For which trees blush'd with fragrant loads of fruit,
And laughing streams ran through the swarded turf ;
For which this sparkling lake bright flash'd
Its gem-like woof of colours in the sun,
And ouths and fairies sang
Such wildly joyous strains,
Their gleesome hearts impregnate then
With music's glowing powers ?
Alas ! this seems like mockery in heaven,
That now an icy shadow

On the souls of all pure things should lie,
They dead with throbbless hearts,
And voices hush'd in unawakening sleep.

The Spirit smiled—
His face irradiate with heartfelt happiness,
When thus God's sovereign acts
He might in eloquent words defend—
And at that smile
I felt a pleasing glow of warmth and joy
Illumine my whole frame,
With strength too keen and exquisite to speak
In unembodying words.
Aye, soul of fallen man,
Whose quick perceptions, unforgetful yet
Of earth's base taint,
Compell'd thy sight for one unhappy moment,
Through those film'd eyes
Of thy near kindred mortal race,
With ignorance and with passion's humours dimm'd;

This is that which, warp'd by prejudice
And evil thoughts,
Thou and the seed of man call Death ;
But now with gladden'd eager-sensed ears
Hear thou, the truth eternal, unimpeachable.
God's will is law throughout wide heaven and earth,
Which Time and Chance themselves
And all their petty ministers obey,
Abysmal Chaos and fair Light in awe obey,
Thrones, powers, and dominions heaven-born,
And Nature's wide extended, infinite rule.
Perfect, and co-eternal with himself,
Are these his changeless laws, a portion of his
Being, immeasured even by the boundless
Thoughts of hierarchal seraphim ;
His seat is universe, his strength himself,
Himself all power, all truth, and virtue.
Uniform in order's solemn harmony,
Beneath his feet fix'd stars, and suns, and planets
Move ; His hand traced out their orbit march,

And paved each golden path with solid light ;
'The attendant moons, watchful as loving brides

 Their warrior lords,

When on their slow, majestic way, erect,
And arm'd for mail-clad battle's deeds renown'd,
They proudly go, He placed to shine by night,

 In chasten'd glory,

'Their brows else veil'd in mantled modesty.

 The rolling seasons him obey :

 All things of earth,—

'Thunder and red-fork'd lightning, and black storm,
Uptearing, from their strong foundations,
Stalwart oaks, deep rooted in the ground,

 And angry tempest,

Sweeping ocean's mad, tumultuous waves,

 In heaving fury to the skies :

Fires, that burn unquenchably in central earth's
Mysterious depths, his breath enkindled ;
Huge rocks, vast caves, and precipices stern,
Green hills and old aged mountains, bald and bleak,

He in their several places order'd :
And valleys, whose cold, forbidding wildnesses
Have ne'er been trod by man's untiring step,
Or teeming with the rich luxuriant harvests
 That the fatten'd loam
 To art's compelling culture yields,
And lakes, and seas, and rivers, hoarse thund'ring
On their riotous ways in fierce noise and foam,
 Through channels, o'er whose broken beds
 The granite-encovering banks
 Throws black and threat'ning shadows,
 Or else, slow-moving, broadly
 On proud embosom'd tracks,
 To morn's rejoicing beams,
Lave their fresh shores with glitt'ring waves,
 And on their mighty tides
Invite commerce to sit as some great swan,
With wings outspread to catch the willing breeze.
These, and all fair subjects of the day and night,
Do him continual reverence : the leaf

'That rustling quivers in the wind, the flower
That sleeps when twilight's popped breath suspires
Its drowsy influence on their thin dream-quivering
Lids, or that at morn awakes in smiles
To drink the roseate dew, and to inhale
The fragrant freshness of the balmy airs
That wait Aurora's graceful step; the fruit
That ripening mellows in the summer's sun,
The gale that sweeps o'er autumn's golden fields,
The insect, sporting in the noontide breeze,
Or gather'd to his clustering tribe at even
When the unthinking throng swarms in some
Streamy shaft of light the sinking sun
Shoots from his kingly eye, and spirits
Unseen and shadowless as such formless airs
That play among the sedgy reeds, beside
Some glimmering stream, those pleasing strains
The night-enshaded traveller hears entranced,
When no rude voice the unearthly charm may stint,
Or such as flitter o'er

That smooth unwrinkl'd wave,
And ruffle not the moonbeam on its glassy throne ;
The latest snow that lightly falls upon
The lily cheek of April's first-born flower,
Or that far spread o'er winter's chilly plain,
On cold earth's iron lap unmelting lies ;

Yes, these and all things else,
From some great world whose overgrown proportions
Mortal mind may ne'er in their hugeness grasp,
'To each small shell or grain of unmark'd sand,
'That lies unnoticed on the curving beach
Of an expansive sea, in him have strength
And form existent, palpable. These are
His glory, his resistless rule, all lesser
Powers in these may work harmonious ;
But in these are bound their adamantine bands,
And to their rigid sway must yield, or in low
Shame expire, if with ambitious hope they
Cross His will before whose stern, whose just,
Unwav'ring purpose the mightiest thing

Of universe pithless must fall, opposing.

Weak man may rule his own poor petty sphere,

God's word hath said, this law,

Which universal wisdom

Hath writ down unchangeably ;

But as the meteor beam

Passeth his fading will away

Immerged in God's effulgent light,

Which swallows up

Ten thousand earth-enkindled stars,

And yet no greater radiance knows,

These powerless in their transitory flash

To add one single ray to his almighty sun.

Spirits all soul,

And things of air impalpable,

Who have no earthly hearts

To feel fierce passion's taint ;

Whose minds are fill'd with God's unbounded love,

And lips his constant praises chant,

And oughs and fairies, gentlest of earth's race,

Living unseen by man's dull eyes, unpurged
Of ignorance and sin, all have their powers,
Their many happy powers unknown, unwitness'd,
But yet on him we lean, on him our God,
Whose changeless, swerveless strength can never fail
Nor ever be evaded. In some lone starlit vale
We may make palaces unto ourselves
Of sparkling gems and rich luxurious flowers,
We may call upon the lute voiced birds to sing,
And make the silver streamlet flow, and clothe
The soil with living green, and hang ripe fruit
Upon the glistening bough—but we, Idalian garden,
And Hesperian fruit, must yield
To God's eternal rule, or in that fainter
Struggle far, than nerveless age, opposed
To giant manhood's prime, may wage, sink into
Voiceless death, and unrecorded nothingness.
The flower may blossom, but its leaves must fall,
That the fine seeds which give it birth may form ;
The stream may flow, and warble as it flows

Under the melting rays of summer's soft'ning sun,
But when cold winter waves his icy sceptre
O'er the land, its tide must sleep beneath
His freezing breath ; the mellow fruit, not pluck'd,
Falls to the ground and there decays, resolved
Into diffusive elements, feeding the soil
To give new birth and power to coming spring ;
Else the flower is frozen in its bud,
And dies and blooms no more, the tiresome stream
No change of beauty knows, denies itself
To nature, nor e'er one hundreth part
Its magic strength may feel, and earth full soon
Becomes a kneaded lump of sterile clay
When from her *all* is taken, *nought* return'd.

Yes, the loveliest thing that ever yet
Had graceful undivided being,
That ever shone in light,
Or wreath'd itself in smiles,
Aimless as zephyr

Playing o'er the dimpling waves of summer sea,
Or firm as earth's unbending axis,
Ne'er shaken from its nicely balanc'd poise,
But in reliefless constancy beheld,
Grows tame to eye and mind.

The sense rejects the perfume of the rose,
Smelling too oft its concentrated sweets ;
The fever'd eye flies from the dahlia's
Rainbow dyes too constant seen, to dull,
Unmeaning black or to barbaric red.

Seeking relief
From ever-present beauty's agony,
And music is all mute and passion soulless,
But that God's providence,
In wise ordainment, makes

Kaleidoscopic *change*
The ruling spirit of man's varying life.
Nought yet of bright and beautiful,
Nor breezy gush of gayest waterfall,
Nor art-refined music's swelling strains,

Nor sea shell's pearl, deep dyed with nature's blood,
Nor naiad stooping o'er her golden well
With feathery robe and motion all so airy,
 Nor morning's liquid star,
When day's pale tinge enstreaks the lucid east,
Nor summer's crescent half moon
That trembling hangs in amethystine sky,
Nor grayish autumn's sweetest twilight its
Mantling folds o'er the calm world throwing
When eve's pure spell sinks deeply in the heart,
As though high God had breathed his holy spirit there,
 But that if seen or heard
 In form or voice *unchanging*,
The avoiding soul seeks bitterly to shun.

What, then, is death but change? What then is life?

And change, that in its many forms

 New beauty ever shows?

Now see, bless'd Soul, once more the curtain'd veil

Yielding before the breath of magic power,

Lifts broadly from the future,
And now again the fairy bower,
Like some fresh open'd delicate bud,
Catching the vivid warmth of spring's gay smiles,
Blushes in thousand fairest tints,
Enravishes the kissing winds with incense rich,
While showers of dews,
Distill'd from out the azured skies,
Down on the shrubs and trees, and stainless sward,
And flowers and grass on which the moonbeams lie
In lightest snowiest flakes,
Softly fall like angel's tears in heaven :
Such is thy will, Oh God ! both *great* and *good*,
And to thy praise I sing.

I.

Amidst the golden lights on high,
Dread God, thou art sitting,
And with effulgent searching eye
Heaven's king befitting,

Darts through wide space a universal ray
While men and angels own thy ever blissful sway.

II.

Whose hand hath made these arching skies,
And clothed the sunset with its gorgeous dyes?
Who gave the moon to shine
When twilight, pale, slow gathers o'er the world,
While for short time day hath his radiant banner furl'd?
Father sublime, 't was thine.

III.

Who fills night's ebon vault with silver fires,
And showers the orient rains?
Who gave the whispering breezes mystic lyres
To play those soft-toned strains
That lull sweet eve to calm and holy sleep,
While from spring's cradling buds the bright eyed
dreamlets peep?
Father supreme, 't is thee.

IV.

Who gives me joy exhaustless thus to sing,

And words to weave my lay ?

Who gives full strength to each created thing,

His praise to chant, from whom all pleasures spring,

Even as from the source of day

Light springeth on its bright and gladd'ning way,

O'er forest, hill, and vale, with splendour-streaming
ray ?

Again, great God, 't is thee.

V.

Then sun and stars, and deep and moveless sky,

And modest, meek eyed moon,

Wake, in resounding tone, the pealing melody ;

And ye, earth's fairest things, that bloom

In joy's bright light,

Whose heaviest, darkest, gloomiest doom

Is soft as May's pure night,

Ye shady bowers and rosy streams,

And hills that catch the morning's beams,
Ye fertile vales whose laden harvest fields
To man their golden treasure yearly yields,
And ye, bless'd Spirits, whose immortal souls
Shall live when earth through space no longer rolls,
(If such sad hour may ever be,)
Join ye to swell the choral symphony ;
Just God, we sing to thee.

Long on the spirit's glowing face I gazed,
Moveless I gazed with eye enwrappt, entranced,
Watching the heaven-lit changes of his smiles,
Listing the notes breath'd from his trembling lips,
As, with a quick and sympathetic motion,
The wavy outline of his airy form
Thrill'd to the thoughts that stirr'd throughout his
being ;
Then from my joyful trance the spirit voice
Awoke me with soft words which fill'd my ear
With wild Æolian music.

Thus earth arose from out the womb of time—

On that morn which first, in raptured gladness,

Saw the glorious sun

Flash through the enwreathing mists

Of Chaos' expiring power,

Light up the blushing clouds,

Smile o'er the amaranthine main,

And fill wide heaven with his royal glance,—

Thus did this planet Earth,

Revolving in its silver-beaming sphere,

On happy course eternal move, singing

Pure praises to the Almighty Father

Who gave it life and loveliness.

Soul of man, from whose admiring eyes

The scales of ignorance have fallen,

Thou seest God's hand in all, designing *good*,

And working out his ends with fullest power.

Spirit, I ask'd, shall these far blazing suns

E'er pass away?

Shall earth be blotted out from heaven ?
Shall heaven itself be wither'd into nought ?

Nor spirit, nor angel, the voice replied,
Whether from heaven or from the deep abyss,

Save One,

The dread, the unbegotten, unconceiv'd,
Can e'er look back with uncreated mind,
Unbounded, super-infinite as himself,

Unto the astounding birth

Of mightiest Universe,

Or can conceive its end.

But know thou, undying Soul,
With intellect unbondaged, disenthral'd
From mortal claims and those cramping pains

Of finite thought,

Faint struggling in immortal gaspings

With its clanking chains—

Thou, with strength engifted well to see and feel

The everlasting truth,

That if yon stars were quench'd in their bright paths,
If yonder myriad suns—behold their thronging
Glories intermingling round God's unseen
Throne, in an unmeasur'd blaze of radiance,

Throbbing with ecstatic bliss—

If all these multitudinous splendours
Were blotted out in solid darkness,
If images of horror unexpress'd,
Ten times more fierce and horrible
Than deepest hell's unmention'd terrors,
Hissing black venom from their blist'ring tongues,
And ever with untiring throats shouting

Discordant thunders,

Were to fill all measureless space with their
Terrific rage and poisonous stench,
If universe herself convuls'd,
Should, in her dying throe, tear the vast heavens
Away, yet in God's great judgment would these acts
Be done supreme in *good*.

Each word the Spirit spake seem'd fill'd with truth :

In vain I look'd abroad for hidden death ;
I search'd the living heavens,
I ran my glance o'er earth :
With sympathy celestial the wing'd voice
Read in my beaming eyes my thoughts,
And then again he spoke
In sorrowing tone.

Thou knowest man's eventful history,
Whose every page is red with human carnage ;
Sin, and fire-eyed Discord, eldest born of Sin,
Have quaff'd, exulting in the feast,
Their gory goblets to the very dregs.
The piteous cry of Wo, weeping convulsed
O'er dying Hope, borne on the wailing winds,
Have knell'd uncounted nations to their graves.
Despair and squalid Misery, bound by
No laws of God or man, nor fearing ought,
With torn and filthy raiment, saturate,
By murder, with life's crimson spoil, that strange

And sadly hideous in the sun appears,
Reeling and blind with wretchedness and guilt,
Hand in hand, o'er earth's broad fields,
Have widely wander'd,
Heralded by Desolation.

Yet lower still, than when he fell from heaven,
Man sank, seduced by mad ambition's
Softly whisper'd tale, led on by Luxury
And Vice. Thus was the avenging wrath
Of God at last enkindled into deadly
Flame, and Soul, e'er now, on man's devoted head,
While yet the curse of blasphemy
Was black'ning on his lips,
While yet with solemn ceremonial pomp
He bow'd his knees, in disobedience,
To false gods, the vials of scorching death
Had full been pour'd, if He—unto the Lord
Be power and glory evermore—who leads
The angelic bands, bless'd Son of God,
The Christ of man, and Saviour of the world,

Had not, in sufferings, wo, and mortal
Agonies, redeem'd mankind from sin
And writhing pains, eternal as the never-fading
Soul. But man was only partly saved ;
The curse of death no longer, as a pointed
Sword, to cleave the brain in torture, o'er
Him hung ; but sin was left unslain, to trail
Through earth his serpent path, and yet to prey
On man, who, in free agency, defenceless
Stood, if found unarm'd, in virtue's mail of proof.
And with this complex-figured fiend
Came Ignorance, with her loathsome motley
Brood ; vile Prejudice, with his crook'd limbs,
And jaundiced eyes distorted from the truth ;
Error, whose visual ray, deaden'd and owlish
In its leaden stare, prefers night's darkness
To the light of day ; Envy and Malice,
Palsied Doubt, and Rule, and damned Untruth,
With lip of honey and with heart of gall.

These fix, in fiendish glee,

The heavy chains that rusty on the mind,

These curb the soul's free wings,

These crush the germ of intellect

In its quick'ning power,

Or dwarf into the stunted bush

That hides the knotted serpent in his nest

The intellectual oak, whose roots would

Strike to central earth's rich mineral beds,

Imbibing, from these precious treasures

Of the hidden mine,

Lustrous beauty's rarest colourings,

Whose high tow'ring head would proudly seek,

In the pure depths of air,

The showery font of the empyreal dews.

These shout and clap their hands with savage joy,

When rampant war, leaping infuriate

From the bonds that feebly bind

His giant limbs,

Draws forth the thirstying sword,

Unfolds his blood-red banner

To the flaring skies
That gleams above his threat'ning crest
The beacon light of terror
Winds forth the startling bugle blast,
Loud echoing through the land,
That pales life's current on the boldest brow,
While with bright dagger, flashing in its ire,
Full at the fluttering heart of gentle Peace
He strikes, that shrieking at the unpiteous
Blow, quick flies the bleeding vail, to crouch
Amid the rugged mountain's unscaled rocks.
These, with Hypocrisy's insidious smile,
Unto the unsuspecting stranger's thirst
Proffer, in treacherous act,
The bowl, deep drugg'd with fiery poisons.
These, in religious mask, seek,
With the inquisitorial rack,
And humid dungeon's solitary gloom,
And speech, that tempts with golden lies,
As from the great first serpent's tongue, to force

Unbartering Conscience to forswear herself,
To sell her freedom-birthright, and to live
The slave of Prejudice and cramping Rule,
 To clog her form immortal
 With dull mortal dress;
To die a tortured death, a death that knows
No glorious afterbirth of bliss, no end.
These taint earth's airs with their infected breath,
 They fill the conquering hero's heart
 With dreams of selfish power,
And turn the troubled channel of his thoughts
Awry, until the hot, tumultuous waters
Of the mind drown fainting Reason.
Then are the latent fires within his breast,
By passion's swift raging tempest, into
Glowing phrenzy's comet-heat full stirr'd,
And *he*, whose hand should hold the patriot
Spear, whose brow should wear the laurel wreath
Accredited by proud-eyed Fame, whose life
Should be a treasure and a blessing to mankind,

Whose consecrated body should go down
Beneath the hallow'd sod, while nations chant
The solemn dirge of him, the nobly just,
Whose soul should seek the bosom of its God,
Upborne by minist'ring angels, singing
Sweet hymns of joy to their symphonic harps,
Unstain'd by crime, untrembling but with bliss,
Becomes a peevish despot on his tinsel throne,
The curse of history and mock pageant
Of a day. *These* perplex, with sophist craft,
The counsel of the wise, distracts the statesman's
Honest aim, direct disastrous cabal,
And prompt in cunning guise to intrigue,
Groveling in its shame, that ends in loss,
In wo. They sit with Learning, 'midst her
Treasur'd stores, whispering strange phantasies
In her wond'ring ears; or walk with Science
In the academic porch, teaching to her
Unquiet mind inexplicable subtleties,
For those calm truths on which, before, she

Firmly based her strength. They muse with grave
Philosophy, where secluded deep within
The hoary grave she silent sits,

Poising, with Archimedean strength,

The intellectual universe

Of her own vast thought.

They muse with grave Philosophy, whose mind
They puzzle with obscuring mists, whose hand
They weaken with their feverish draughts,
Until at last, in feeblest impotence,
The sage goes tott'ring down to his unhonour'd
Grave, his soul unnerv'd, his mind a chaos,
And his world a joyless wreck. In siren
Voice they chant sweet lays to Fancy, while
In gay sunshine, beside the murmuring
Stream, he careless sits, weaving a blooming
Chaplet for his laughing brow, and as
The cunning song swells from the musical
Note that breathes love's fragrant sigh, beneath whose
Trembling melody so gently exquisite

The airs themselves are breathless o'er their tinkling
Lyres, into ambition's deep stirring trumpet
Sound, the soft boy-god of poesy leaps
Startled from the turf, throws from his dimpled
Hand the half crush'd wreath of roses,
And with the all-quenchless flame undying
At his heart, seizing with eager haste his
Tuneful harp, that hangs upon the myrtle
O'er his head, with one quick rapid glance
Around him on that fairy home, of all his
Former joys the happy scene, boldly with
Flashing eye for lofty Parnassus' sun-crown'd
Head he strikes, but presently quick panting
Out of breath, full on some sharp and barren
Rock he falls, and there unnourish'd, dies.
In boastful strength they stand uncourting light,
And if perchance they raise their blinking eyes
To God's eternal sun, they see no inspiration
In its noble beam, its blaze is hurtful
To their feeble gaze, and while the putrid curse

Lies rotting in their hearts, ashamed and guilty
In their own black thoughts they crawl in slime away.
With fell intent they ever shoot their aimless
Shafts at Truth, as with bold flight she circles
Through the skies, and if an arrow, shot by their
Malignant hands, should hapless bring her stunn'd
And bleeding to the ground, while helpless there
She lies, in rage that speaks the low born
Tyranny of mischanced rule, the petty passion
Of an adder heart, they scatter dust upon
Her plumage bright, and try with busy power
To break her golden wings, until at last
She gathers life and opes her eagle eye,
When shivering then with dread at that majestic
Glance, quickly they slink away to hide themselves
In gloom. But their dangerous sway, to be in part
Still felt until the roseate dawn

Of the millennium day,
Continues o'er the earth, and even
The good and wise, seeing through those mistied

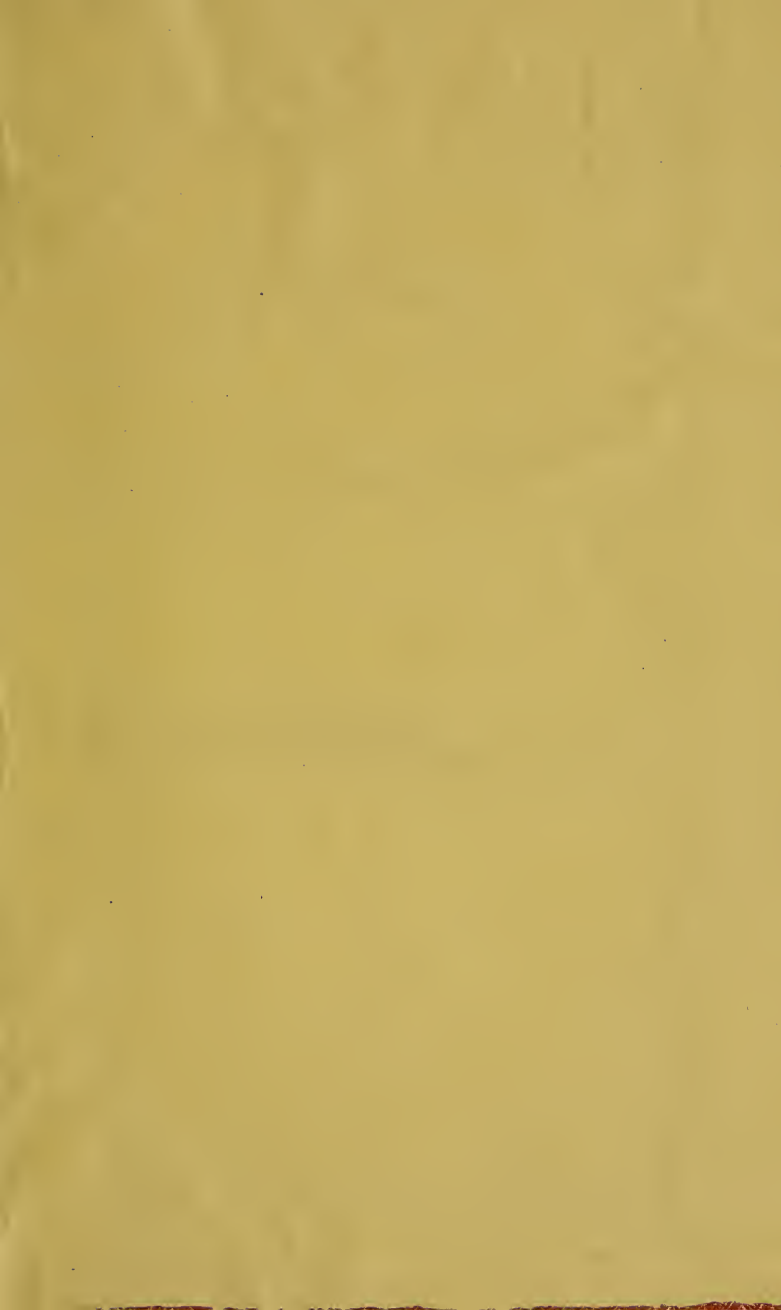
Mediums, which they in their vile orgies
Make, unknowingly distort God's perfect will,
And following far the quagmire exhalations
Which are raised to cheat adventurous thought,
For this false gaseous glitter of the night,
Mistake the sacred influence of Truth's law
Divine. But come thou now with me, my task
Is yet to show thee, radiant Soul, how God
To man is ever merciful, to thankless man,
Who sometimes, in his self-made ignorance,
Blindly deems beneficence an injury,
And great God himself a fiend !

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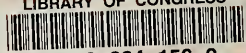
END OF PART FIRST.

ERRATUM.

Page 29, line 15, for *muttering*, read *melting*.



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